



## **Montgomery County Library Board**

June 14, 2023

**ATTENDEES:** Bravin, Brier, Christman, Fiery, Levine, Lighter, Montgomery, Pant, Schiff, Spencer, Vale, Will

**STAFF:** Anita Vassallo, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lighter at 7:02 PM

### **INTRODUCTIONS:**

- Roll call of Board members and introduction of guests

### **MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:**

- The minutes from the May 10, 2023, meeting were approved.
- The following LAC applications were approved: [Motion to approve by Schiff; seconded by Montgomery; unanimous vote to approve all applications]
  - Accessibility Advisory – Plaxen
  - Olney – Needleman
  - Potomac – Grimm and Miller
  - Quince Orchard - Knight

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- **Personnel:** The following staff changes took place during the month of May 2023:
  - New Hires:
    - Taye Workneh, Library Assistant I, Gaithersburg
    - Greg Beaudoin, Library Associate, Twinbrook
    - Sarah Brumback, Library Associate, Gaithersburg
    - Melissa Hurley, Librarian I, Rockville Memorial
    - Shaunda Vasudev, Librarian II, Twinbrook
    - Rachel Demsey, Library Assistant I, Marilyn Praisner
  - Transfers:
    - Leroy Simon, Library Assistant I, Long Branch to Brigadier General Charles E. McGee
    - Ann Stillman, Branch Supervisor (MIII), Damascus to Gaithersburg
    - Colleen East, Library Assistant I, Aspen Hill to Rockville Memorial
    - Natisha Harper, Branch Supervisor (Senior Librarian), Potomac to Long Branch
    - Uzo Onyemaechi, Branch Supervisor (MIII), Twinbrook to Germantown (June)
    - Laura Bechtel, Branch Supervisor, Germantown to Damascus (June)

- Promotions:
  - Grace VanderVeer, Library Assistant I, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee to Library Associate, Davis
- Other Changes:
  - Lolita Weedon, Human Resources Manager (MIII) to Office of Human Resources
- Still hiring for Library Associate positions and branch supervisor for Maggie Nightingale.
- 2023 Summer Reading Challenge Kickoff, June 17, 10:30 AM – noon at Rockville Memorial Library. This year's slogan is "All Together Now" with a theme of Kindness, Friendship, and Unity. This indoor-outdoor will include:
  - Summer Reading Challenge! signups and book giveaways
  - Craft tables
  - Strolling magician Abracadabra Alex
  - A dynamic musical performance by drummer Kofi Dennis
  - Hands-on educational tables to learn more about partners Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center, Friends of Montgomery County Animals, Manna Food Center and, Montgomery Parks Foundation
- Upcoming Virtual Authors Talks:
  - An American in Provence: Award-Winning Photographer Jamie Beck  
Thursday, June 15, 2 PM; See More and Register
  - Black Panther: Tales of Wakanda with contributing author Tananarive Due  
Wednesday, June 28, 8 PM; See More and Register
  - Charles Soule: New York Times Bestselling Author of Daredevil and She-Hulk  
Saturday, July 15, 2 PM; See More and Register
- Juneteenth Programs:
  - Thursday, June 15: 5 – 5:45 p.m. at Wheaton Library, 11701 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring  
Elementary school aged children will create their own Juneteenth flag using popsicle sticks. Supplies provided. Registration is required. Register at <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/8386833>
  - Friday, June 16: 3 – 4 p.m. at Long Branch Library, 8800 Garland Ave., Silver Spring  
Elementary school aged children will create their own Juneteenth flag using popsicle sticks. Supplies provided. <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/8485445>
  - Saturday, June 17: 10:30 – 11 a.m. and 2:30 – 3 p.m. at Germantown Library, 19840 Century Blvd., Germantown  
Juneteenth Storytime designed to delight children of all ages, filled with diverse stories and activities that promote and develop language skills and imagination.  
<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/8380234>
  - Saturday, June 17: 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Wheaton Library, 11701 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring  
Audio Book Discussion: Annette Gordon-Reed's 'On Juneteenth', the story of Juneteenth's significance to American history, as told by a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and Texas native.  
<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/8320205>
  - Saturday, June 17: 3 – 4 p.m. at Marilyn J. Praisner Library, 14910 Old Columbia Pike, Burtonsville  
Movie: Just Mercy - based on the book by Bryan Stevenson. A powerful and thought-provoking true story follows young lawyer Bryan Stevenson and his history-making battle for justice.  
<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/8475411>

- Wednesday, June 21: 6 – 8 p.m. at Germantown Library, 19840 Century Blvd., Germantown  
On the Cusp of Freedom: Remembering Emancipation in Maryland. Historian Anthony Cohen of the Menare Foundation will speak about the importance of freedom in the era of emancipation.  
<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/8554917>
- Saturday, June 24: 3 – 4:30 p.m. at White Oak Library, 11701 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring  
Learn about the history of Juneteenth and the significance and symbolism of the Juneteenth and Pan-African flags, followed by an opportunity to make a magnet or other eco-friendly memento of the holiday incorporating these symbols. Supplies provided.  
<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/8557644>
- Thursday, June 29: 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. – Virtual  
A Celebration of Freedom - Learn about the history of the Juneteenth observance from a personal perspective of oral historian Kelly Elaine Navies, a Museum Specialist with the Oral History Initiative at the National Museum of African American History and Culture.  
<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/8527484>
- MCPL received a National Association of Counties (NACo) award for the 2022 Summer Reading Challenge. Appreciative of Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, that allows MCPL to make many enhancements including the one made to the Summer Reading program.
  - Question: What is the Summer Reading program process?
    - Most libraries around the country have summer reading programs.
    - MCPL does follow the national theme but creates its own graphics.
    - Cassandra Malik restructured the program last year and renamed it Summer Reading Challenge.
    - MCPL does work very closely with Montgomery County Public Schools via the school media specialists.
- Question: Do we share author talk information with other library systems?
  - MCPL is not promoting its programs with neighboring counties.

#### **CHAIR' S REPORT:**

- Shared comment from Long Branch Library customer in appreciation of Long Branch's Pride display.
- Will forward Maryland Open Meetings Act updates to Board members.
- Will send the FY24 meeting calendar to Board members.

#### **WORKGROUP REPORTS:**

- Library Policy and Practices (Bravin, Fiery, Lighter, Manubay)
  - Policies have been forwarded to Felicity Brown in Collection Management.
  - Will regroup and begin looking at other policies in September.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Ezeadum, Montgomery, Schiff)
  - Spent the last month pushing for the \$825K so that Libraries can continue to hire staff. Talked to almost every Council member or their staff and wrote letters. The outcome was positive. Many of the Council staff, who were very interested in Libraries, asked to be updated in the fall on Libraries' progress.
- LAC and Board Activities (Levine, Pant, Will)
  - Starter list for the next version of the LAC Handbook.
  - Aspen Hill LAC asks whether LAC officers from each group ever communicate with each other.

- This is a good idea. Almost every LAC is struggling with recruitment.
- Wilma Brier joins this workgroup.

## **LIAISON REPORTS:**

- Olney – Has not met in two months. Meets on June 20. Accessibility Advisory - Meets quarterly. They are doing really great.
- Gaithersburg – Adaobi Ezeadum is the new liaison. She was introduced to the Regional Manager who has been trying to get a meeting scheduled.
- Aspen Hill – Met late last month. Very concerned with following proper procedures. Working on a youth project with the Regional Manager. LAC members will staff a table at the Juneteenth Rockville Town Square event. Very interested in the garden club's work in making the area inviting.
- Long Branch – Held a hybrid meeting on May 18. There were five people in attendance. The LAC has many members, but low meeting attendance. Seeking more committed members. Suggested those interested in serving on the LAC attend a meeting before applying. Talked about the possible improvements to the facility. Long Branch has four vacancies; there is concern about filling those positions. Considering changing the time of the meetings. Senior Librarian/Branch Supervisor Natisha Harper stopped in and introduced herself.
- Marilyn Praisner – Currently has no LAC; working with the Regional Manager to get it started. Visited the library and noticed there was no paper pamphlet for LAC recruitment. Will talk to the Regional Manager about getting the pamphlets.
- Montgomery County Public Schools – Busy closing down for the school year. June 16 is the last day for students. Gearing up for summer school. Still able to match up the MCPL Contemporary Conversations speakers with high schools. Karen Washington, the May speaker on the topic of urban farming, was invited to Einstein High School, where a teacher has a hydroponic garden setup - this was a good match. The June 9 speakers went to Wheaton High School.
- Damascus – Met on June 13. There are a lot of well attended events for teens to preschoolers. Met with new branch supervisor Laura Bechtel. The Damascus Day parade is on Friday, July 7; the library will be represented there. The LAC requests permission to extend the election until September.
- Quince Orchard – Met on June 13 and held elections. Will be 100% staffed by summer. The branch had to close for a day due to a pipe issue which did no damage to materials or equipment. They are thinking about ways to get teens involved, possibly with the garden.
- Germantown – Met on May 22. There was not a quorum so elections for officers could not be held, will try next meeting. They have a new LAC bookmark, which has been placed in strategic areas of the library. An LAC member staffed a recruitment table during the Saturday storytime hour; it was very successful. Interested in obtaining plantings for the entrance of the building.
- Noyes – Turning over liaison position to Carla Vale soon. Meet on May 11; did not have a quorum. Tentatively scheduled to meet in July.
- Potomac – Wanted to raise the issue with the Board about having an LAC email account. An opportunity for community people to send views about library services to the LAC. Will designate several members to monitor the email box. It was suggested that the liaison also have access to the email account.
- Connie Morella – Met June 13. Jackie Rivera-Oven, from Councilmember Alborno's office, attended. [It was noted that invitations to elected officials to attend LAC meetings should come from the Library Board.] They are excited that another storytime has been added. There is a maintenance issue in the meeting room – a grinding noise is heard every 15-20 minutes. Kate Sweeney has put a ticket in regarding this.

- White Oak – Has not met since the last Board meeting. Tentatively scheduled to meet in July.
- Brigadier General Charles E. McGee – Met on May 15. Next meeting is June 20. There is new content in the Children’s section on new Americans. Successful computer classes are ongoing. In August, Vinyl Day is coming back and will include a scratch battle. Still working to get someone from the Maryland Transit Administration - Purple Line - to attend an LAC meeting. [The Library Board, backed by the Director, can make the ask of MTA].
- Davis – Carefully follows all the rules. Understands they were to have elections by June 1. No existing officers wanted to run again; they will remain on the LAC. They feel they are not being taken seriously. Not happy with the Regional Manager setup or the handling of the strategic plan process.
- Montgomery College – This is the end of the fiscal year. The construction for the Leggett Math and Science building will be completed in December with a grand opening planned for March 2024. Takoma Park Library is scheduled to reopen in spring of 2024. East County Education Center, which was supposed to open fall of this year has been pushed back to spring 2024.
- Little Falls – Met on June 6. Main purpose of the meeting was to hold elections; no one wanted to pursue the offices. Plan to schedule another meeting before the end of June. Continue to work on the Request for Proposal; a member is putting together a proposal for the outside design. There have been some problems with the elevator.
- Rockville Memorial – Met on June 6. There were five members present with the Regional Manager, who gave a briefing on the budget. Talked about personnel change. The branch supervisor also attended the meeting.
- Twinbrook – Not currently meeting. Patrick Fromm is working on it; will work with him.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- None

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Thought for the future: In 2026, it will be the semiquincentennial (250 years) for both the USA and Montgomery County. Is Montgomery County going to be doing anything to promote the knowledge of local history on that anniversary? Director Vassallo has not heard anything but will bring it up with the CAO.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Happy the LAC Handbook is going to be discussed with the LACs. The Aspen Hill LAC gmail account can be accessed by the chair, secretary and Board liaison. It has been challenging to hold elections because many of the LAC members are going through serious life events. Requests to postpone the election until September. [Althea Grey McKenzie, Chair, Aspen Hill LAC and former Library Board member]
  - From Board Chair: Please work with the Regional Manager and Board liaison regarding the elections.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

- The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.